

Veranstalter	Georg Maier
Thema	Historical Phonology [AA-A1, ENG-4, ENG-4a, ENG-5, AA-V1b, AA-V2b, AA-W, AA-M1]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar Ib
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-509
Zeit	2st. Mo 16-18
Raum	Phil 1269
Beginn	4. April 2011

Compared to languages such as Spanish, Italian or Finnish, the relation between the spelling of English words and their pronunciation seems rather eccentric. On the one hand, we observe single sounds which can be represented by a considerable number of different spellings. The /i:/ -/ sound, for instance, can be realized by more than ten different spellings as the examples of *be*, *sea*, *see*, *Caesar*, *quay*, *receive*, *peopele*, *key*, *police*, *field*, and *amoeba* illustrate. On the other hand, a single spelling often represents several different sounds as the examples of *through*, *dough*, *bough*, *cough* and *rough* demonstrate.

The single most important reason for this mismatch between spelling and pronunciation in English is that the spelling of words has not kept pace with the substantial changes that the phonological system of English has undergone within the last 1500 years.

After an introduction to the topic and a brief recapitulation of the key notions and concepts of phonology, this course will address fundamental questions of historical phonology such as: What is language change in general and what is sound change in particular? What changes? Who is responsible for these changes? Why do sounds and languages change at all?

In a next step, this seminar will deal with the most important phonological processes, such as splits, mergers and shifts, before we will go on to discuss some of the theoretical models which English historical linguists have used to map these processes.

Furthermore, this seminar will focus chronologically on the most important phonological changes from Old English to Modern English, including the phenomena of 'Breaking', 'Lengthening' and 'the Great Vowel Shift'.

Course requirements:

Participants are expected to attend regularly, participate actively (!), do the reading and homework assignments, give an oral presentation, submit a mid-term essay and pass the final exam.

Recommended reading:

Beckford Wassink, A. and J. Dyer 2004. "Language Ideology and the Transmission of Phonological Change: Changing Indexicality in two Situations of Language Contact". In: *Journal of English Linguistics* 32 (1): 3-30

Blake, R. and M. Josey (2003) "The /ay/ Diphthong in a Martha's Vineyard Community: What Can We Say 40 Years after Labov?". In: *Language in Society* 32 (4): 451-85.

Joseph, B. and R. Janda (eds.) (2003) *Handbook of Historical Linguistics*. Malden, MA/Oxford, OX: Blackwell.

Kortmann, B. (2005) *English Linguistics: Essentials*. Berlin: Cornelsen.

Lass, R. (1997) *Historical Linguistics and language change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McMahon, A. (1994) *Understanding Language Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, J. (2007) *Sound Change and the History of English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Trask, R. L. (2010) *Why Do Languages Change?*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit:	Mi 16-17 Uhr, Phil 106
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